



The Dixie Ranger

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THE MILLENNIUM BUG

By now you probably know about the Year 2000 problem, also known as Y2K. Makes me think this is something from Star Wars. The Y stands for year and 2K is computer geek for 2,000. As Ken Edwards, Georgia Tech Math Professor, said at our September luncheon meeting, computer systems and programs are designed so that the year is stored as two digits instead of four. When the year 2000 rolls around, the computer will read the year 2000 as "00" and therefore operate as if the year in question is 1900.

Four major problem areas are: Hardware, Operating System Software, Application Programs, and Embedded Systems. Computers are everywhere! There are mainframes and minicomputers, personal computers (less than 1% of the microprocessors) and Embedded Computer Systems (the other 99%). An example of embedded systems—HVAC controls, thermostats, lights, generators, elevators, alarms, telephones, ATMs, postal meters, building access systems, parking access systems and security systems, just to name a few. This is not a simple technical problem than can be corrected immediately. Billions of dollars are involved to bring systems into compliance.

What should you do? Mr. Edwards recommended that you identify personal computing issues. Ask questions about your embedded systems—letters to your bank, mortgages, power company; investments; and personal resources. Pay attention to Year 2000 issues. Here is a list of some personal considerations that you may wish to heed:

- ❑ Start a Year 2000 plan. Know what you will do in case problems arise. Follow news developments so that you will know how to respond.
- ❑ Obtain multiple proofs of identification. These should include an original Social security card, a certified or notarized copy of your birth certificate, a valid passport, a current drivers license, a voter registration card, plus any other I. D.s.
- ❑ Collect paper records of your important possessions so that you can prove ownership if necessary. Include deeds, titles and proofs of purchase to homes, property, cars, boats and other such items.
- ❑ Secure hard copies of other important records, including financial documents. These should include mortgage and loan agreements, credit card statements, state and federal tax returns, health and prescription plans, leases, veterans

benefits statements, safe deposit contracts, major warranties and insurance policies for car, home and life and accident coverage. Also, include in this file a Personal Earnings and Benefits Statement from the Social Security Administration. Ask for Form SSA-7004.

- ❑ Create a paper file on companies or agencies you deal with on a regular basis. The list should include electricity, water, telephone, cable TV, as well as credit card providers and mortgage holder. Include copies of bills received and payments made.
- ❑ Keep paper copies of all significant transactions between now and June 2000. This will help you avoid billing errors.
- ❑ Consider adjusting your withholding allowances so that your tax bill evens out with the amount held. Some experts say that for the next few years it's better for you to owe the government a small amount than having the government owe you. If there's a computer glitch, you may experience delays in getting your refund.
- ❑ Ask your employer for hard copies of your work record, including employment dates, performance reviews, bonus calculations, vacation and sick leave accumulations, payroll deductions and current pay level.
- ❑ List the various accounts you have with your bank. These could include checking and savings, certificates of deposit, retirement accounts, trust and investment accounts and safe deposit boxes. List account numbers for each. Be sure to keep deposit slips well into the year 2000. Take extra care if you bank by computer. Make sure your own computer is Y2K compliant and begin keeping paper records of all transactions.
- ❑ Write down how much you charge every time you use your credit card. You can list totals in your checkbook, starting at the back and working forward. That way you can keep checking and credit card transactions in one place. Don't get into a situation where you're dependent on your credit card, especially if it has an expiration date after Jan. 1, 2000. Some card readers may not be able to accept your card. Carry at least one credit card with an expiration date other than "00" in the year. Also, consider carrying traveler's checks in case of an emergency. Mr. Edwards also recommended having enough cash to cover needs for 30 days.
- ❑ As the year 2000 approaches and for a time thereafter, double-check all interest calculations. They are based on time and date and Y2K calculations are very error prone. Ask your mortgage lender for a statement detailing the interest and principal payments you have made to date, along with a payment schedule showing how your loan will amortize. Keep canceled mortgage checks as proof of payment through the first half of the year 2000. Make a note to check with your mortgage company to be sure that your property taxes and homeowners insurance have been paid. Then, confirm that with the appropriate tax authority or insurance company.

- Know when your insurance premiums are due. If your insurance company suffers a computer glitch and you don't get a due notice, you can be prepared to pay the premium.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



STAN ADAMS (ELLEN), P. O. Box 526, Four Oaks, NC 27524,
Phone: 919.963.3064

RICHARD HOFFMAN (CAROLYN), 5605 Ashwoode Downs Dr.,
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770.983.3019 e-mail mseehorn@flash.net

Please make the following changes to the Directory. Changes are indicated by underlining:

Bert and Betty Bray, 70 Wilkes Court, Newnan, GA 30263, Phone: 770.253.0392

Ron Couch, P. O. Box 4146, Pineville, LA 71361-4146. E-mail: writer@linknet.net,
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Jerry Coutant, e-mail: coutfg@negia.net

Roy Gandy, e-mail: rgandy_1011@aol.com

Marvin Hoover, e-mail: suehoover@aol.com

Robert J. Lentz, e-mail: rlentz@intercom.net **W:**

<http://www.easternshoreartist.com/indexa.html>

John Moser new address after April 1: 1171 Sanger Ave., Spring Hill, FL 34608

Donald Skrehot, skrehot@webtv.net

Clint Sykes, csykes@1cc.net

Lawrence Walker, e-mail: lwalker@sfasu.edu

Jim Wenner (correction) dorjimw@hsnp.com

Judy Nicholas Etemadi, 5019 McLaughlin Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32308, Phone: 850.893.6017, e-mail: jetemadi@tfn.net
James E. Gates, 826 Manor Road, Independence, MO 64055, Phone: 816.833.0976

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT
THROUGH 12/31/98**

1/1/98 Balance Forward	\$5,336.92
Income (Dues & Donations)	<u>2,976.21</u>
TOTAL	\$8,313.13

EXPENSES:

	<u>Projected</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Printing	\$1,600.00	\$1,501.36
Postage	600.00	590.52
Door Prizes	200.00	207.00
Misc.*	<u>265.00</u>	<u>57.27</u>
TOTAL	\$2,665.00	\$2,356.15

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1999

Printing	\$1,600.00
Postage	700.00
Door Prizes	200.00
Misc.* *	<u>700.00</u>
TOTAL	\$3,200.00

Projected Income for 1999:

390 members - only 196 owe dues @ \$8.00	\$1,568.00
Carryover bank balance from 1998	<u>\$5,956.98</u>
TOTAL	\$7,524.98

*Misc. expenses: gift for outgoing President, checks, and guest speakers

**Misc. expenses 1999: Includes National Forest Service Museum Lifetime Membership of \$500, plus \$100 to FSFSX Club of Washington (if requested) and \$100 for SFSRA expenses.

BOARD MEETING

The Board of Directors met prior to the December luncheon. Those present were Dan Sims, Oley Aycock, Peaches Sherman, Bob Erickson and Betty Bray. A proposal from a member was received in the form of a Resolution regarding membership in the National Forest Service Museum. The Board voted in favor of the Resolution and presented it to the membership in attendance at the luncheon. The Board also discussed raising dues \$2.00 per year and earmarking this amount for the Museum. It was decided to ask the members for their input before taking any action. Some members already are contributing members by a \$20 membership in the Museum. The Resolution is as follows:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the U. S. Forest Service, Washington, D.C., has stipulated that no government funds are available to contribute to a National Forest Service Museum now or in the foreseeable future, and

WHEREAS, the Forest Service is a unique institution, not only because it was given control of large areas of unsettled land to manage, but also because it developed an organizational culture that was unmatched among Federal agencies and served as a model for other government agencies, and

WHEREAS, a museum can serve as a repository of an institutional memory to preserve the accumulated experience of the Forest Service as it developed management policies and operational techniques in carrying out its mission.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in the interest of preserving the history of the Forest Service through a national museum, the Southern Forest Service Retirees Association desires to become a Lifetime Member (\$500) in 1999 and contribute on a yearly basis thereafter the sum of \$100 per year to the National Forest Service Museum for the duration of the existence of the Southern Forest Service Retirees Association.

ADOPTED this 10th day of December, 1998, through representative vote of the membership in Atlanta, Georgia.

/s/ Robert Erickson
President

/s/ Betty D. Bray
Secretary-Treasurer

For those wishing to obtain an individual membership in the Museum for dues of \$20 per year, the address is as follows: NFSM, Box 2772, Missoula, MT 59806-2772. They publish a quarterly newsletter—a benefit of annual or lifetime membership.

The Board of Directors, SFSRA, would like to hear from you regarding the increase in dues for *The Dixie Ranger* so that we can send additional monies to the Museum. Keep in mind that we have already pledged \$100 per year as a result of the Resolution. Please send your comments to the Secretary-Treasurer no later than May, 1999. **NOTE OUR NEW MAILING ADDRESS.**

NEW OFFICERS FOR 1999



President: Jerry Edwards
Vice-President: Bob Bowers
Secretary-Treasurer: Betty Bray
Board Member: Bob Johns (2001)

JUNIOR FORESTER ON THE SABINE

Special Use Permits

Once a year we made the rounds of permittees, those folks farming a few acres of industry land since before FS acquisition. To avoid hassles and to keep friends, we issued special-use permits at minimal or no cost. In approaching a permittee's shack we'd stand back and loudly call out HULLO, lest a vicious dog find your rump tasty, as one did mine. Finally, someone would appear, see the "gov'ment" shield on the side panel of the pickup, and show fear. Government always meant trouble for these people and, as a Snuffy Smith cartoon of the period illustrated, there was no distinction between the Treasury department's revenueurs and the Agriculture department's foresters. So Snuffy says to Aunt Louisie as the tree-badged fellow wearing the Smokey Bear hat walks

up the trail, "Shoot 'em. Works for the same outfit, don't he?"

When the HULLO is answered, you learn that no Jake lives there. Then, when told you want to give him a free-use permit so he can continue to plant, chop, and pick his cotton, the resident responds, "Oh, *that* Jake. He's in the back room." Many of the Jakes legally could have taken possession under squatters' rights laws: Fence and farm the land for seven years and its yours.

Schools and churches received special-use permits. We even provided free stumpage for them. They got local peckerwood mills to convert the logs into rough-sawn lumber for the buildings.

Land-Line Controversy

One old-timer and his wife inherited the East Texas mean streak. The controversy involved a line

being surveyed that separated their property from that of recently purchased government lands. The objection to the work of the surveyors was so strong that the old man ran off the survey party with a shotgun while the Missus, at the appropriate distance, cradled in her arms what appeared to be a 30-06 rifle. Even the US Marshall, sent in from Beaumont, was greeted uncivilly as he stood by the Jacob staff upon which was mounted the Forester's compass. As I recall, final settlement of the dispute took place in a federal district courtroom in Beaumont. Old witness trees, cut at the base and carried to the courtroom, convinced the judge that the elderly folks did own the land. FS surveyors were trespassers. But such opinions were not unusual, for jurists and juries in these quarters generally took the side of those opposing the federal government's intrusion into the lives of citizens. They still do.

Supervisor's Visit

I was accepted by the Yale Forest School and the FS at about the same time. Explaining the situation in a letter to *Washington: Personnel*, I received word to proceed to Texas, take leave without pay in September, and return to the district the next summer. My job, the letter said, would be protected, and it was. But Supervisor Bosworth didn't like the idea and, in a brief memo, told me so.

I do not feel the end ever justifies the means to that end, but inadvertently that happened on this occasion. I again addressed *Washington, Personnel*. Within a few

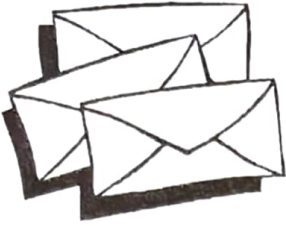
days the regional forester in Atlanta got word to Mr. Bosworth that the FS would stick by its agreement. I never learned what happened in the RF's office; but P.F.W. Prater, assistant RF for personnel, H. C. Eriksson, regional training officer, and Herbert Stone, the RF, to the present greet me warmly. Only as I write this does it occur to me they could call me by name 40 years later!

The angry supervisor drove to San Augustine, picked up Ranger Nick, and headed for Bayou Blue where I was deep in the woods marking timber. I suspect they watched a while before HULLOING to let me know of their presence. After the Ranger introduced me to Mr. Bosworth and we exchanged a few pleasantries, they left. Later I learned the supervisor came all the way from Lufkin to severely chew me out for going over his head but, seeing a leg totally shorn from my trousers by the thorny vines, a sleeve in similar disarray, yellow marking paint from baseball cap to boots, and bloody scratches on my hide, he chickened. He'd seen the diligence with which I encountered the briars, brambles, and blackberry vines. Soon Anne and I left by bus and train for New Haven, Connecticut.

Before I left the Sabine, Ed Ellenberg signed on as a JF. The Sabine soon split into two districts, and Ed and Marge moved to the Yellowpine District, headquartered at Hemphill. Anne and I remained on the newly named Tenaha. As I write, nine professionals and some contractors do the work assigned Ranger Nick, Johnny Johnson, and me in the late forties. *End of a series*

of excerpts from "Excelsior: Memoir of a

Forester by Laurence C. Walker.



LETTERS FROM OUR MEMBERS

ED GRUSHINSKI, Asheville, NC - Please renew my membership for a couple more years. It doesn't seem like 12 years since retiring from the F.S. I've enjoyed every bit of it. Hiking the Forest trails with visitors brings on a different perspective of forest management. It's one way of maintaining contact.

Classes at the local college for seniors at UNCA are a great way to exercise cerebral protoplasm. Discussions of such books as *TAO TE CHING* and *AGELESS BODY TIMELESS MIND* are quite thought provoking and illustrate how our thinking can become narrowed over the years. I was pleasantly surprised to see Jack Kennedy in one of these classes some time ago.

Otherwise, I maintain an intermittent contact with Dick Moore through our mutual barber with whom we exchange views on life, forest management and politics.

Richard Gueko, Recreation Staff, NFs in NC, retired, passed away early in December.

JOHNNIE AND BARBARA CROFT, Olustee, FL - the 9th annual Old Smokies reunion will be held Saturday, April 10, 1999, at Ocean Pond. The Osceola NF retirees are hosts this year and we are chairpersons. If you are not on the mailing list, get in touch with us at P. O. Box 34, Olustee, FL 32072 for specific details on the reunion.

MARVIN HOOVER, East Wenatchie, WA - Enclosed is a check for \$16 which I hope pays my dues through '99. I want to thank you for your good work of keeping records and putting out *THE DIXIE RANGER*.

It is a long time since I worked in R-8. I was employed by the Appalachian Forest Experiment Station at the Coweeta Experimental Forest from Feb 1940 to July 1948. Then at the Central Piedmont Research Center at Union, SC, by the newly rechristened Southeastern Forest Experiment Station. I transferred to the Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station in 1953 and retired in 1973. The productive forests, and good people of the South stay brightest in memories refreshed by *The Dixie Ranger*.

O.D.SMITH, Russellville, AR - Don Peterson's account of his experiences burning in the Appalachians brings to mind one of the early site preparation burns on the Mena District, Ouachita NF. This would have been about 1966 or 1967. Dave Jolly was the District Ranger, Johnny McLain was the Resource Assistant and I was the Timber Assistant.

Conversion from all-aged, selection type timber management to even-aged management was in full swing, but not yet fully accepted by many of the "old hands" who considered it nothing more than "raping young timber." I prescribed a seed tree cut in a 40-acre mature shortleaf pine stand with burning for site preparation. In those days the markers were waiting at the back door for a completed prescription so the stand was soon marked, sold and cut. After the tops had dried for a few months during the summer, it was time to burn. Johnny was the burning boss on the district and had considerable experience in burning the K.C. Railroad right-of-way each year but had not done much, if any, burning in timber stands. Like most mature pine stands on the Ouachita at that time, this one had numerous patches of younger saplings and poles scattered about and, of course, there were a lot of pine tops from the logging operation. We picked a day, got a good weather forecast, assembled our forces and touched it off. I was going to record the event on film since Johnny was handling the burning operation. Dave Jolly was observing. Well, about the time we got the first strip fire going pretty good we evidently had a frontal passage because the wind got up and the humidity dropped and all of a sudden, we had some fire on our hands! When the fire started crowning in those patches of young pines we all got pretty nervous. I put my camera in the truck, got a fire rake and started looking for spotovers and Dave Jolly did the same.

When we had a column of smoke going up several thousand feet and laying over just like you see on the big western fires, we noticed a small aircraft circling the area. What we did not know at the time was that Supervisor John Tom Koen was in that plane. He had spotted the smoke as soon as the plane lifted off from the airport at Poteau, OK, and had come to check it out. As soon as he got back to the office in Hot Springs he went to the fire shop and asked his Fire Staff

Officer (Johnny Davis, I believe) about the progress being made on the big fire on the Mena. Johnny said that he did not know about any fire on the Mena and John Tom lit into him and said he had damn well better be finding out about it because it looked like they were about to burn off the whole east side of the district.

Somehow we managed to contain the burn within the lines that we had plowed and although most of the seed trees were scorched, we only lost a few. For about the next year we really caught hell but managed to survive it. Ranger Jolly did not even get transferred as we had thought he might. The Regional Multiple Use Coordinator came out from Atlanta to inspect the area and declared it to be a prime example of "insensitive management." Later on when a carpet of green seedlings covered the area, they were bringing visitors to show them the advantages of using prescribed fire for site preparation!

JOE DUCKWORTH, Wiggins, MS - Here are my dues for a couple more years. You are doing a good job!

Really enjoyed Laurence Walker's article in regard to Ivan Nicholas. I had the pleasure and honor to work for and with Nick on the Kisatchie.

CARL E. OSTROM, Prescott, AZ - The modern era of the Forest Service took off when Franklin Roosevelt took office in January 1934. Soon there emerged various employment programs and a great boost for forestry and conservation.

At that time I wrote to Ed Munns, head of Silvics in the Forest Service and he offered me an emergency job in the Washington Office. I went right down from Philadelphia on a Saturday when the banks were closed, and I was practically penniless. I offered a government refund check for ten cents to an apple vendor on the street, but he refused to accept it for an apple.

I proposed to go to Virginia where there were hock shops to hock my father's gold Elgin watch, but the trolley fare was ten cents and I had only a nickel.

On Monday morning I reported to Ed Munns at the Forest Service diggings on the seventh floor of the old brick Atlantic Building on F Street. This was not long after F.S. Chief Stewart had fallen from his office window, and Roosevelt appointed Labor leader Silcox Chief of the Forest Service.

Sometimes I wonder how many F.S. retirees are left who worked in the old Atlantic Building before the completion of the new Agriculture Building on Constitution Avenue. One of the memorable features of the Atlantic Building

was the iron-cage elevator, which would certainly have given the “willies” to the ensuing phalanx of F.S. safety officers.

That seventh floor was truly a chummy situation for the small staff of that day. It was a modest beginning for a very productive and rewarding period for the Forest Service.

DADE FOOTE, Atlanta, GA - I see by the label on my last *Dixie Ranger* that my dues are behind. Here's a check to catch up and get me a little ahead.

This year I'm joining the “Bob Hitt tradition” with a tour as Santa Claus at Northland Mall in Columbus, Ohio. Attended “Santa School” at Planet Hollywood in Atlanta and the old timers had a lot of war stories for us. It'll be long hours, but it should be fun. If I survive, I'll let you know how it was. I hope it's not as tough as they make it out to be because I had a minor heart problem in August, resulting in the balloon treatment and the insertion of a stint in one of the arteries in the heart. I haven't had any problems with it, but it has changed my eating habits.

TED L. MATHIS, Asheville, NC - I'm one of the parenthetical (97's) referenced in the latest newsletter and wish to reconcile that by the enclosed check.

The Dixie Ranger is interesting mail and I appreciate your efforts to make it more readable—sometimes I think it would be more interesting to have less “stories” and more short bits and pieces about retirees pursuits, situations and events. I realize you are limited, of course, as to what is submitted but this might prompt more response to the newsletter.

I continue to live in East Asheville, involved in the National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) Legislative Officer for the local chapter, and teach at Montreat College in Black Mountain, NC.

Thanks for your good work.

(Ted, your point is well taken. I get extremely nervous each time I get ready to do a newsletter because there are so few letters coming in. I was delighted when Mr. Hoover, Wenatchie, WA, introduced himself in this issue. We encourage all our members to write and tell us what they are doing. Thanks for your comments – Betty)

BEN STANSEL, Cleveland, TN - Here are my dues for the next two years. As a relatively new retiree (still working on my first year), I really do appreciate all the work you and the other staff are doing. I have many good friends that I have made during my career of almost 35 years, and it is so good to hear from them through *The Dixie Ranger*.

JIM WEBB, Fairview, NC - Enclosed are our dues for 1999 and 2000. It is always great to hear of happenings and read articles by folks whom we have known and worked with in many places throughout our Forest Service career.

This summer on our trip west we visited with Dorothy Krueger (wife of Carl Krueger, Forest Supervisor of Pisgah-Croatan and Texas National Forests in the 1940's and early 1950's) in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Dorothy was a good friend of some of Jeannie's family while they lived in Asheville.

I read with great interest Katherine Allen's article on the Human Resource Programs in the last *Dixie Ranger*. One of my greatest personal satisfactions came from working with these programs over the years. It is good to see the growth and the wide use of the volunteer program since it started in 1973. In the early days some of our first volunteers were campground hosts.

I have been a volunteer at The North Carolina Arboretum since 1993. The NC arboretum is on a site of 426 acres on the Bent Creek Experimental Forest, Pisgah NF. We have over 175 volunteers and are very proud of the work going on there!

This summer we are planning another hiking tour of the Alps in Austria and Italy. We plan also to return to Switzerland after enjoying ourselves there so much in 1997.

Let's keep talking up the USFS Reunion 2000 in Missoula! Many R-8 folks are missing a good thing. (*We enjoyed our first at Park City, Utah in 1996-editors*)

HOWARD BURNETT, Deale, MD - Don Peterson's recent recollections of trying fire in the mountains mentioned that I had tried it near Franklin. We had been trying to figure some way to get some big laurel-rhododendron "slicks" converted back to trees, and fire seemed like it might be worth a shot. If we could minimize the risk! We had already used a bulldozer to uproot and pile brush on one slick, and that was too expensive to think of as an everyday silvicultural practice.

The opportunity came with the advent of Arrowood Job Corps center, with sufficient manpower to hold a fire line. The fire had to be hot enough to do in the laurel, so it did present some control risks. At the same time, Jack Kelly, the work supervisor at Arrowood, needed some fire training for the Corpsmen, so we gave it a go near the head of Arrowood Creek. We torched a steep 6 or 7 acre slick, and it burned real good. Almost too good, in fact, as it became a really hot fire. We all held our breaths as the Corpsmen held the line; and they did!

The burned area was planted with white pine, as I recall. I was soon transferred, so don't know what ever became of that site. I hope it didn't just revert to a new laurel slick. At the very least, the Corpsmen had their first fire experience!

DON SHENKYR, Rockville, MD - Time goes by so fast and I just realized I owed dues. Enclosed is a check.

Our past summer was eventful. Shortly before we were to leave for our summer place in Minnesota our neighbor to the south of us called to let us know their garage and house burned. They said our place was scorched. This was somewhat an understatement. The siding, windows, shutters and roofing on the south side had to be replaced so we had a rather disjointed summer. More work replacing lawn, shrubbery, etc. Can't replace the 150 year plus red pine and white pine that went. Anyway, I can't find anyone that transplants 100' trees. Enjoy reading the *Ranger*. Keep up the good work.

IN MEMORIAM

Floyd Iverson, 88, retired Regional Forester, died November 3, 1998 in Ogden, Utah. Surviving are his wife, Margaret, and son John of Salt Lake City, and four grandchildren.

NEW LEADERS FOR THE SOUTH

Bruce Jewell, Deputy Regional Forester for State and Private Forestry

Eurial Turner, Deputy Regional Forester, Operations

Dave Holland, Deputy Regional Forester for Natural Resources

Charlie Richmond, Forest Supervisor of the Ozark-St. Francis NFs

Jerome Thomas, Forest Supervisor of the Francis Marion-Sumter NFs

Rinotta McNair, Deputy Forest Supervisor, NFs in North Carolina



Luncheon Dates for 1999

March 18 June 10 September 9 December 9

Our next luncheon will be at the Petite Auberge restaurant on March 18, 1999. It's located in the Toco Hills Shopping Center on North Druid Hills road. We meet at 11:30 a.m. for fun and fellowship. Lunch is served at 12 noon. The cost of the luncheon is \$10 per person. Reservations are required, so please call either Peaches Sherman at 770.253.7480 or the Brays at 770.253.0392. Reservations should be made no later than Tuesday, March 16th. We'll look forward to seeing you there. Please record these dates on your calendar so that you don't forget the luncheons.

PRECIOUS MEMORIES OF ARKANSAS

By Jim Wenner, Retired Ouachita NF Planning,
Recreation Staff Officer

Crossing the White River

In June 1966, Doris and our kids camped on Sylamore Creek while I worked at Blanchard Caverns. One day we drove the seventeen dusty miles to Calico Rock, Arkansas. A bridge was being built across the White River to the bluff on which that quaint town perches. But we had to cross the old way on a crude bundle of water-soaked logs and timbers. The map showed a ferry here, although we had doubts. When we drove onto it, water came up almost to the axles. Hand winches on board connected to a cable stretching to the opposite bank. By cranking the contraption to an angle with the river, the current pushed us across.

We retraced that route while at the Blanchard Caverns-Ozark Folk Center 25th anniversary celebration. This time we cruised on paved road that Arkansas can be proud of. We whisked across the White River bridge smack dab into the same Calico Rock. Downtown hasn't changed one iota in decades (in a century?). It's a tourist village now where the White River Railway brings visitors to savor history.

I asked the conductor if he remembered the ferry crossing. "Not me," he explained, "I moved here from Louisiana. But I have heard about an old boat over there on the other shore somewhere." So I walked across the bridge to the west bank. Upstream you could still discern an indentation that could have been a road end-ferry landing. And near the bridge abutment was a mud-filled

eddy. Like a ghost, a ferry-shaped image arose, half from the bank, the rest from the mud in shallow water. It conjured up a greeting: "Remember me? The bundle of logs that moved countless settlers across the White River? The hulk that almost sank under your station wagon? Oh, the stories I could tell! But that bridge rail you're leanin' against keeps today's travelers from seein' me. The whoosh of their speedin' cars drowns out my tale. Some day the White River will rise and the current will wash me into oblivion. Will anyone remember?"

Celebrating, Interpreting, Preserving History

Back in 1974 we recreation folks on the Ozark and Ouachita National Forests hosted a meeting of the Association of Interpretative Naturalists (how's that for a mouth full). Interpreters representing National Park Service, Forest Service, Corps of Engineers and State Parks came to Mountain View from all over the East. They toured Blanchard Caverns, the Ozark Folk Center, then "had dinner on the ground" at Albert Sand's nearby farm.

Albert Sands later described the event: "I had an old horse that folks said would never plow. But I hooked up that horse, had my sister hold the plow while I led the horse down the row, and by golly he learned to plow. Well, when these folks came for dinner we hooked up that horse and everyone had a try at plowing. Not very straight, mind you, but they did plow. They milked our ole' pole cow and churned butter, too." (Charlie Blankenship, recreation staff on the Jefferson National Forest almost wore out that butter churn!) "Children chased down chickens and my sister wrung their necks (the chickens', not the children's), scaled them, plucked the feathers, cut them up and cooked them on a wood stove. Oh, we had maybe a bushel of potatoes; we mashed them with our feet! We had a real good time that day."

Local musicians (including Buddy Lancaster and Lynn Young) played folk music on guitar, banjo, autoharp, base and fiddle. Some threw down doors for clogging and others square danced. In other words we acted out how it was, living in the Ozarks in times past.

Well, anyway, one Saturday night over a bottle of corn liquor, Caverns Administrator Lynn Young got Albert Sands to describe the good old days, and what we did at his party. Lynn recorded it all. I had taken slides of the musicians, dancing, plowing, milking—the whole thing. From this we developed a timeless, illustrated narrative presented with sound, two projectors and a dissolve unit. Jean Simmons' singing and dulcimer music added a colorful background. This show was named for Jean Simmons album "Precious Memories." In the '70's and '80's this show was well-received throughout Arkansas, especially to high school history classes.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE...

Joanne Webb, Tallahassee, FL, shares with us her last letter from Bill Cranston.

Being Chief is Not Always Fun by Bob Neelands, St. Augustine, FL

How Did That Job Turn Out? by Jim Wenner, Hot Springs, AR

A Wild Ride on the Rio Rollercoaster by Joel Nitz, Hot Springs, AR

A WALK IN THE WOODS

A book review by Jim McConnell

The subtitle of this *New York Times* best seller is, *Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail*. The author, Bill Bryson, was born in the US but worked and lived for 20 years in England as a writer. He returned to the US and decided to walk the Appalachian Trail (AT). The cover jacket says it is hilarious. I found it rather funny but certainly not hilarious. But then I bet I know more about the woods than the *NY Times*. Throughout the book, Bryson manages to rip into almost everyone and everything. He was displeased with: the US Forest Service, the National Park Service, map makers, other AP walkers, the AT itself, camping and walking equipment makers, country stores along the trail and on and on. Right at the front of the book you wonder if he really knows what he is talking about. He concludes that global warming has caused the loss of chestnuts and elms and will be the demise of Fraser Fir, mountain ash, sugar maple and flowering dogwood. I wonder what happened to all that research our scientists have been doing. He didn't like logging or roads through the woods. However, he tells how on at least two occasions they saved his wagon and probably his life. He did make one good point in the book. He wonders why Americans like for their walking trails to go so far through wilderness. In some areas day after day of nothing but a wall of trees. There are few vistas and nothing even pretty. He suggested that the walking trails in England and Europe are a lot more fun. You can walk all day, see a variety of things and then, sleep in a nice bed in a small village. He thinks walking should be fun, not an ordeal. This is a good point. If you have walked the AT you may be interested in reading the book. If you haven't, don't bother because you'll probably decide the walk is not worth the effort.

THE GREAT GARBAGE CAPER

By Howard Burnett

When I was the Ranger at Chatsworth, GA, around 1960, a lot of garbage was getting tossed out on to National Forest lands. The towns of Chatsworth and Dalton had city garbage collection, but beyond the city limits people were on their own for trash disposal. My neighboring Ranger, John Allen, and I noticed the National Forest lands were getting an increasing load of trash dumped on them, and the closer to a town, the worse it was. We decided to try to bring this under control, and devised a plan of attack.

We drafted a standard letter to send to people whose names we found in garbage, telling them their activity was a trespass on Federal lands, and to please remove the trash they had dumped. There was a warning that continuing to dump might result in legal action. (At the time, we really had no idea if we could pursue legal action or not – but it sounded good!).

Then the dirty work began. We had to paw through piles of trash to get names off old letters, etc., a decidedly ugly piece of work if there ever was one, and one which Forestry College had not prepared us. But we persevered, and came up with a few names, and sent out our first letters.

The day after the first letters went out, the biggest State Highway Patrolman I ever saw came in the Chatsworth office and said "I confess, I did it!" He told me he was advised to dump his trash there by his neighbor, who happened to be the Clerk of the County Court. We had an amiable discussion (the way we try to keep most discussions with Highway Patrolmen), and he agreed to pick up his trash and dispose of it otherwise. As soon as he left, I called John Allen and told him to be sure none of his people committed any road law violations, as we had probably alienated the Georgia Highway Patrol on our first day out! No speeding for us!

We continued our efforts, and got return letters from a few people. One lady said she had picked up her trash, but hoped we didn't think all that trash was hers, as there were whiskey bottles in it, and she would never be associated with such as that! But the fact that a County official was involved from the start indicated the depth of the problem, and it was obvious it would only get worse as populations expanded further. Eventually, efforts by all our Ranger Districts were directed to local governments to give them a push towards county-wide trash and garbage collection, which eventually became the case. We like to think our early efforts helped.

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Note: Please make your luncheon reservations by March 16th. See page 14 for phone numbers.

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